

Universal Credentialing Data Source

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What is its?

- Universal Credentialing Datasource® (UCD) is a uniform, electronic data-collection system that eliminates redundancy and inefficiency commonly associated with traditional paper-based credentialing processes
- It was created by the Council for Affordable and Quality Health Care (CAQH) which is a nonprofit alliance of health plans, networks and trade associations covering more than 100 million Americans

Who Uses it?

- It is currently being used by 604,804 physicians and other allied health professionals
- CAQH has expanded the service to allied health providers in 30 fields, including nursing, optometry and physician assistants.
- available to providers free of charge in all 50 states and the District of Columbia

State Use

- Several states have adopted it as their means of doing provider credentialing.
- The states that have adopted it are RI, VT, IN, KY, TN, LA and DC.

What does it do?

- UCD enables physicians and other healthcare professionals to post the credentialing and demographic information required by health plans, hospitals and other healthcare organizations to a secure, national database.
- The centralized information is controlled by the provider, who must authorize UCD-participating health plans and other healthcare organizations to use his or her data
- Once authorized, those health plans and other healthcare organizations can access the information for their internal provider credentialing processes

What does it do? Con'td

- The system works by having providers fill out one online application form (there is also a hard copy version) and designating which plans that they want to be considered for
- The insurance plan, hospitals etc. then go into the system review the application and decide if the provider is eligible for their network and then they send them a notice saying they have been accepted into the network
- Through this online service, providers complete one standardized application to meet the needs of all participating health plans and other healthcare organizations. Periodic electronic updates increase the quality and timeliness of data.
- CAQH will send e-mails quarterly to remind physicians that it's time to update their credentialing data

Additional Modules

- SanctionsTrack: this service provides sanctions information that is reviewed by the Credentialing department during and in between credentialing events and by Fraud & Abuse departments for certain types of claims payments.
- a centralized data collection process of querying national and state boards on a weekly basis and loading data to UCD on a nightly basis.

Accreditation

- The system meets all Utilization Review Accreditation Commission (URAC), National Committee on Quality Assurance (NCQA) and Joint Commission on the Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JACHO) standards.
- These organizations were among the ones that had input into its development.

Endorsing organizations

- America's health plan, American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP), American College of Physicians (ACP)
- In use by over 400 Health Plans and Healthcare organizations including Carefirst BCBS, Aetna, Cigna, Kaiser, UnitedHealthcare

Advantages

- Since its launch in 2002, CAQH estimates that UCD has saved nearly \$50 million and eliminated more than 1.25 million legacy paper applications.
- Reduction in paperwork is alleviating a significant source of dissatisfaction and cost among the participating providers and health plans.